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Transportation Budget & Policy
Technology, Telecommunications
& Energy



2001

LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

5th District

**SERVING THE CITIZENS OF SOUTH AND EAST KING COUNTY,
INCLUDING THE SAMMAMISH PLATEAU, SNOQUALMIE VALLEY,
MAPLE VALLEY, ISSAQUAH, NORTH BEND, BLACK DIAMOND,
ENUMCLAW AND EASTERN RENTON.**

September 2001

Dear Neighbors,

The terrible attacks on the United States last week have, unfortunately, brought a new perspective to the challenges that faced our state's legislators during the 2001 session.

Between a tied House of Representatives, an earthquake, a deteriorating business climate, an energy crisis, a transportation infrastructure crisis, a critical shortage of qualified teachers and a slipping economy, we had - and still have - our hands full. However, none of these challenges could have the same sort of tragic consequences we saw in our national capital, New York City or rural Pennsylvania. Those who have suffered and our national leaders continue to need our prayers and support.

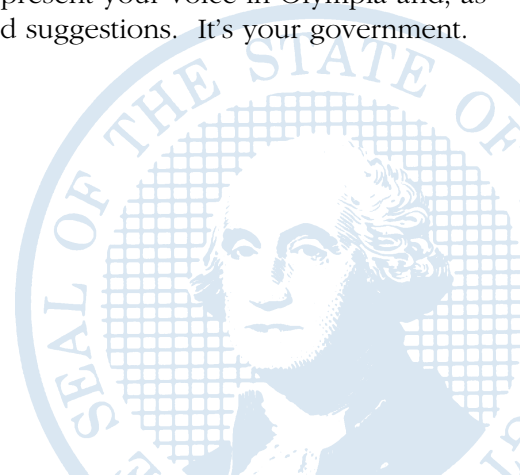
I went into the session looking for opportunities to increase the accountability of state government and restore your confidence in government's stewardship of the people's money. This newsletter provides an overview of some of the more significant strides legislators made, as well as those that still command our attention. Please take a few minutes to read it, remembering that while our state still has issues to resolve, we should be thankful that as Americans, we are able to resolve issues and address our citizens' needs through the process of self-governance and the principle of elected representation.

I am privileged and honored to represent your voice in Olympia and, as always, I welcome your comments and suggestions. It's your government.

Sincerely,

Glenn Anderson

Toll-free Legislative Hotline:
1-800-562-6000



GLENN ANDERSON • SERVING THE 5TH DISTRICT

POLITICAL GRIDLOCK STALLS TRAFFIC CONGESTION RELIEF

I support making new investments in Washington's transportation infrastructure to help people and products get where they need to go, safely and efficiently. I do not support just throwing money at the problem as we continue with business as usual. I have been in contact with the governor's staff and the new secretary of transportation to discuss a number of possible alternatives. My position has been to encourage a transportation funding package that would make sense to citizens statewide, whether or not they were asked to vote on it directly.

To become law, any transportation revenue package has to have support from a majority of legislators – at least 50 votes in the House and 25 in the Senate – and the governor's signature. At the end of the third special session there were not enough votes, Democrat or Republican, to pass a comprehensive transportation package in the House. The negotiations broke down over how to raise the money for those investments, how much to raise, how to spend it and where to spend it.



MORE VALUE FOR YOUR TAX DOLLARS

Your calls and messages to me made it clear that taxpayers are not in a mood to pay higher transportation taxes unless they are sure that existing dollars are being stretched to the limit. Fortunately, the Legislature did approve long-needed reforms that will significantly change the way transportation projects are managed in our state.

One, passed despite years of opposition from Governor Locke, streamlines the construction-permitting process. It could cut the length of time for large projects by up to half while reducing total costs by as much as 20 percent. On a \$3 billion transportation budget, that could be a savings of up to \$600 million!

The second will integrate the "design-build" process into more projects, potentially preventing millions of dollars in costs and months or years of delays. The third allows the state to acquire and "bank" rights-of-way for future projects, as a hedge against rising real estate costs.

These "efficiencies" were supported by the bipartisan Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation. They will immediately give taxpayers more value for their transportation tax dollars and increase the Department of Transportation's accountability.

As a member of the House Transportation Committee, I also worked with other east King County legislators– in both the House and Senate -- to craft a bipartisan agreement that would create regional transportation investment districts.

Regional districts would allow Puget Sound citizens to vote to raise and allocate additional dollars toward solving the traffic problems unique to our region. However, the Legislature's leaders decided not to bring this plan up for a vote until action was taken on a statewide plan. I will be working to get this regional option back on the table for the 2002 session.

There are other roadblocks. The governor continues to refuse to consider prevailing wage reform in order not to offend labor union interests. Also, legislators from Seattle insist that statewide dollars go to subsidize Seattle transit operations. This would be monumentally unfair to non-urban areas in King County and statewide. Finally, the governor and Seattle legislators refuse to let voters decide whether to revalidate or disband Sound Transit, in spite of the extraordinary management fiasco it has become.

I support the idea of making the needed investment in our roads, but not by deceiving our neighbors about the true costs – and not without assurances that we will get our money's worth.

WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT TRANSPORTATION

Based on the comments I've received from you and my analysis of the situation, I believe that a responsible transportation-funding package must include:

- Dedicating the existing \$1 billion in sales tax revenues from auto-related purchases – now part of the operating budget – to the transportation budget.
- Specific timelines for the Department of Transportation to implement efficiencies.
- An opportunity for voters to decide on Sound Transit's future.
- A division of the Puget Sound regional transportation planning organization. Splitting it in two would help assure that suburban and rural voters in Puget Sound have an equal say with urban voters on transportation priorities.
- A statewide revenue plan that funds high-priority transportation projects, such as I-405/SR-167, in an adequate and ACCOUNTABLE manner.

Also, if Puget Sound residents will accept two transportation tax plans – one statewide, one regional – Puget Sound projects should be at the top of the state's list.

2001 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

HELPING OUR SCHOOLS FIND THE TEACHERS THEY NEED

School performance begins with qualified teachers. We passed three bills this session to increase the number of teachers who are “in the pipeline” and available to schools – especially in areas such as math, science, special education and languages.

Senate Bill 5695 was a carbon copy of a bill I introduced in the House. It creates alternate routes to teacher certification, making it easier for successful professionals to move from the private sector to our public schools to teach in their area of expertise.

House Bill 1048 and House Bill 1120 make it easier for schools to fill temporary vacancies by letting retired teachers spend more hours back in classrooms, and giving teachers with lapsed certificates an opportunity to teach while they renew their certificates.

Initiatives 728 and 732, the education measures passed last year, included no new funding, meaning the Legislature was responsible for funding those obligations. The operating budget we adopted for 2001-03 includes at least 8 percent more funding for education than the 1999-2001 budget. It fully funds I-728 and, in accordance with the language approved by voters, I-732.

To make sure we see results from the \$786 million in new funds transferred into K-12 education via Initiatives 728 and 732, I sponsored House Bill 1989, which would significantly improve financial management in our schools. I also supported House Bill 1056, aimed at ensuring teachers are paid accurately according to their credentials and experience.

The Legislature took a step toward making our schools safer by passing Senate Bill 5533. It requires public schools and licensed day care centers to post signs and notify parents regarding pesticide applications on school property.



SOME STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Besides combating government waste, I sponsored legislation that builds on the “Waste Not Washington” act of 1989. House Bill 1907 will increase commercial and organic material recycling, increasing the efficiency of residential recycling, addressing land-clearing waste, and raising awareness.

WOMEN’S HEALTH

One in nine women in our state will face breast cancer in her lifetime. For the past 10 years, all the state could do was give a woman the bad news that cancer had been detected. I supported House Bill 1058, which takes the next step. Now, low-income women who have been diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer through a state-run screening program also will have access to publicly funded treatment.

ELECTION INTEGRITY

The grueling Florida recounts in the 2000 presidential election made it clear to me that our state needed to review its voting procedures. I sponsored House Bill 1739, which requires people registering to vote to be reminded of the age and citizenship qualifications, and sets new procedures for maintaining lists of registered voters. It guarantees safeguards that ensure the integrity of our state’s election process.

STATE’S NEW OPERATING BUDGET WILL LEAD TO A TAX INCREASE

I began the 2001 session committed to passing a budget that would responsibly fund state government operations into 2003. Unfortunately, the \$22.78 billion operating budget pushed through by Senate and House Democrats and signed by the governor ignores the state’s slipping economic condition and taxpayer demands for greater accountability and value for their tax dollars. I had to vote against it.

Over the next two years this plan will spend \$667 million more than the state expects to take in through taxes and other revenue sources. It also spends \$668 million of “one-time” money on ongoing programs. *Continuing this rate of spending would leave the state general fund short by a whopping \$2.5 billion through the 2003-05 budget cycle.*

Just as disappointing was the governor’s veto of budget language that would require the state auditor to conduct performance audits of state agencies, as well as financial audits. The governor’s rationale was that the state already conducts enough performance audits.

This new biennial budget is unsustainable and potentially reckless – and not just because it’s a recipe for a huge tax increase on consumers and businesses, or a drastic cut in public services. It significantly undermines our ability to fund K-12 education and build the critical transportation infrastructure our communities and state economy need.

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HOLDING GOVERNMENT MORE ACCOUNTABLE

The sentiment expressed to my office more than any other this year is the feeling that we should get better value from state government in return for the taxes we pay. State agency managers should always have an eye on constantly improving the quality of services delivered to you. I sponsored two bills with that in mind:

- **House Bill 1517** would require the state's executive and legislative branches to implement quality management programs. It would lower costs by soliciting employee input and redesigning business processes to get out of the "that's how we have always done it" rut.
- **House Bill 1276** would create a Citizens' Alliance for Government Accountability. Citizens who deal with state government laws and rules regularly would suggest ways that agencies could operate more efficiently.

I will continue to push hard for performance audits that detail how much, where and how well your tax dollars are being spent. Considering our precarious state operating budget situation, I believe it is imperative that we apply modern information technology and accounting procedures to manage your tax dollars.

GLENN ANDERSON

Glenn is a business management consultant with 18 years' experience in banking and working with emerging growth companies. He has an economics degree from the University of Alabama with emphasis on international trade and community development. This is Glenn's first term in the House of Representatives.

He is a board member for the Children's Services of Snoqualmie Valley and the Washington National Parks Fund. Glenn and his wife Elisabeth, a telecommunications professional, make their home near Fall City.



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